

16 June 1982

NIO/W Contribution to the Watch Committee

Israel-Lebanon

—Syria's rejection of an Israeli demand for the withdrawal of all Syrian forces in the Beirut area suggests that President Assad is gambling that, by continuing resistance in Western Lebanon and along the Beirut-Damascus road, he will compel the Soviet Union and other Arab governments to intervene more forcefully on Syria's behalf. This high-risk course will play into Israel's hands by affording them a pretext to declare the ceasefire null and void and to resume attacks on Syrian units in the Bekaa Valley.

—An escalation of Israeli-Syrian fighting will place strong pressure on Moscow to play a much more conspicuous role than it has so far. The Soviets in this contingency may be prepared to deploy airborne forces to Syria on the ground that Israel is threatening Syria's territorial integrity.

—Radical Palestinian factions may attempt to blackmail moderate Arab regimes into giving greater support to Syria and the PLO by carrying out terrorist attacks on their leaders, US personnel, and oil installations in Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states.

Falklands

—Demonstrations in Buenos Aires on Tuesday condemning the government's capitulation and demanding an end to the military junta will force Galtieri and his colleagues to increase their defiance of Britain and the US and to make potentially destabilizing political and economic concessions.

Poland

—Renewed demonstrations in three cities protesting martial law occurred the day after the Military Council announced the release of more internees and plans for a further relaxation of restrictions. This sequence, which repeated the pattern in early May when large demonstrations followed a lifting of the curfew and release of 1,000 internees, may aggravate strains in military-party relations. There are signs of disagreement within the regime over whether to approve the Pope's second visit to Poland in August. The papal visit could be the catalyst of a serious leadership crisis over policy and Jaruzelski's steady expansion of the military's role in governing the country.